

IN THE SPECIFICATION

At page 1, please delete the paragraph at lines 7-19, and insert in its place the following paragraph:

-- In our co-pending International application ~~WO 97/02667~~ WO 98/13694 we have disclosed a new diagnostic test for spongiform encephalopathy and other demyelinating conditions in mammals. The test disclosed in our prior application is based on a model of the genesis of this pathological state which is applicable to the various forms in which it is manifest in humans and other animals. In relation to the bovine spongiform disease this model provides an alternative to the current theory based on the formation of prions. Briefly, the new model is based on the phenomenon of molecular mimicry according to which mammals exposed to certain bacteria having peptide sequences which mimic myelin peptides experience an auto-immune reaction. Foremost among the bacteria that are involved in the induction of the auto-immune reaction are *Acinetobacter* species, especially *Acinetobacter calcoaceticus*. The diagnostic test based on the new model opens up the possibility of early treatment of these infections e.g. by use of an appropriate antibiotic to prevent further auto-immune attack on the animal's own myelin. --

At page 1, line 20, please insert the following paragraph:

-- Our application WO 98/13694 discloses a method of testing for spongiform encephalopathy and other demyelinating conditions in mammals, especially Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy (BSE), Multiple Sclerosis (MS), or Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease (CJD), which comprises assaying antibodies present in the mammal which are antibodies to a species of *Acinetobacter* containing the peptide sequence ISRFAWGEV e.g. *Acinetobacter calcoaceticus*. As indicated in this prior application, this peptide sequence mimics a similar peptide sequence in mammalian myelin and induces antibodies which cross-react with myelin of the mammal. This prior application discloses a diagnostic test kit for detecting the above-mentioned diseases by the specified method. --